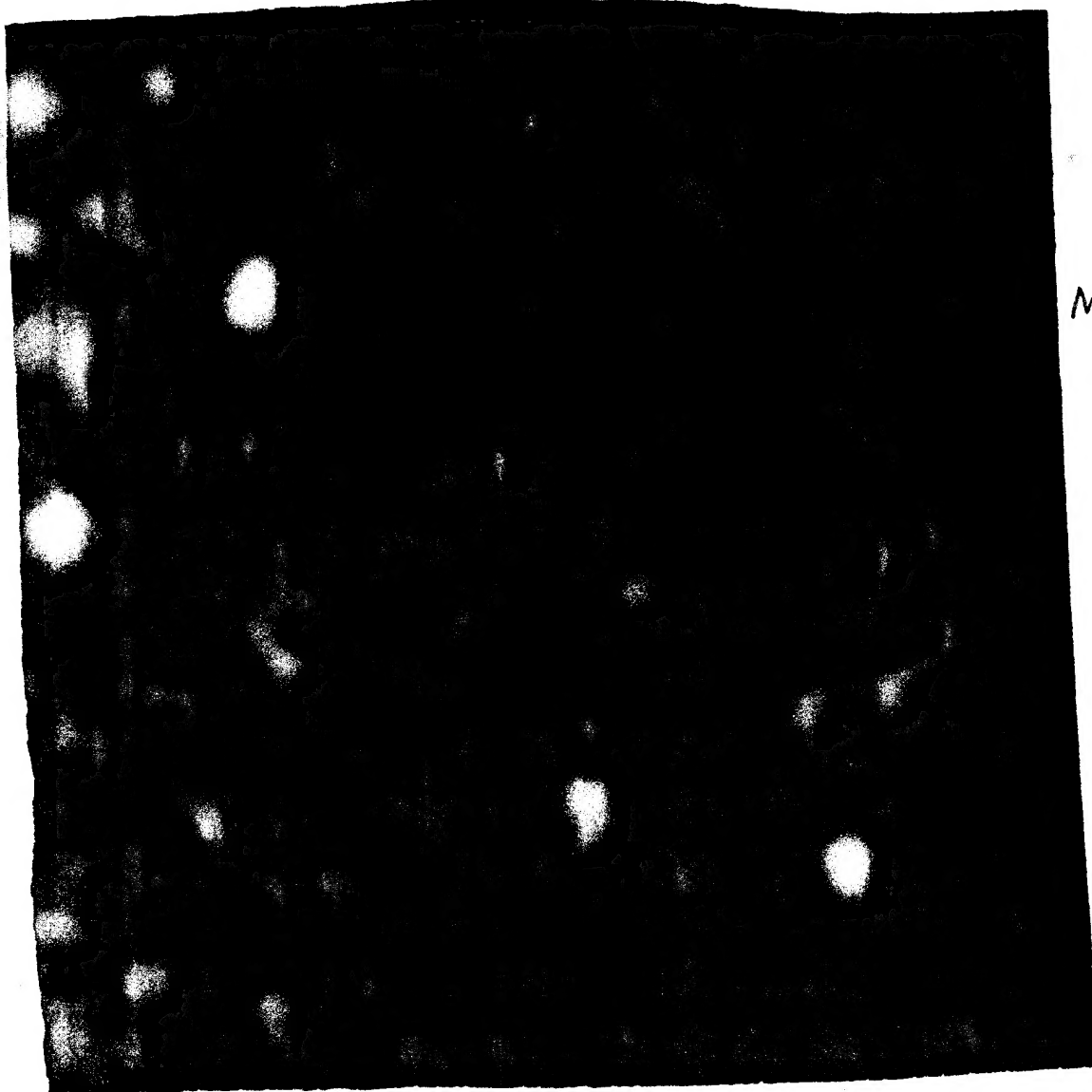


CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

25 October 1956



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**MORE PHILIPPINE HUKS
RELEASED ON BAIL**

The Philippine government's anti-Communist campaign suffered a further legal setback last week with the granting of bail to some 43 former Huk rebels by the court of Pampanga Province. The court's decision

was based on a precedent set last July when the Supreme Court, on a legal technicality, granted bail and a new trial to a prominent Communist leader had been sentenced to life imprisonment. Under the

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circumstances, the prospects are that at least another hundred imprisoned Huks will be given temporary freedom in the near future.

Although the Supreme Court has agreed to reconsider its July decision, there appears to be little hope it will reverse its position. Moreover, the solicitor general has continued publicly to criticize the court for living in an "ivory tower," thereby generating criticism of the Magsaysay administration for interfering in judicial affairs.

Other efforts of government leaders to bring about a reversal of the Supreme Court's action have provoked heavy congressional criticism. Magsaysay's hasty attempt to force passage of a bill tightening the penalty for rebellion through a special congressional session met overwhelming hostility, and was summarily pigeon-holed. Threats of top military officials to resign over the issue only served to encourage congressional and press attacks alleging undue military influence over civil affairs.

Magsaysay has commented that he fears that as many as 1,000 imprisoned Huks will be released and that such a development would return the country to the situation of 1949. There is, however, little likelihood the released Huks will jump bail or attempt to revive the lagging Communist rebellion. Philippine security agencies, moreover, have expressed confidence in their ability to deal with the added burden of surveillance of the released Huks.

The release of large numbers of confirmed Communists probably including members of the politburo, would nevertheless boost Communist morale and provide more effective direction of the Communists' subversive activities. The Philippine public is far less alert to the threat of long-range covert tactics than to that of open rebellion. There is already some sentiment in the Philippine Congress in favor of amnesty to all former Huks, and security officials are concerned that the present trend will encourage rural sympathizers, who heretofore have hesitated to support the Communists.

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